

Wild ride for courage to fight cancer

Donna Staib plans to take her story about a successful fight against breast cancer across the nation – on the back of a Harley-Davidson. **Emma Gumbleton** reports.



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■ Life changing ... Donna Staib, of Arana Hills, will join the bike ride.

DONNA Staib's life changed forever when she was diagnosed with breast cancer as a fit and healthy 36-year-old.

But now the Arana Hills paramedic is taking charge of her future riding a Harley-Davidson.

Breast cancer survivors from across Australia are banding together for the Amazon Heart Thunder Motorcycle Adventure this October, riding along the Great Ocean Road in Victoria and through the Barossa Valley

“I recall the day my sister shaved my head because I was determined not to watch my hair fall out”

in South Australia.

Ms Staib said she hoped the journey would help her in fighting her fear the cancer could come back.

“I recall the day my sister

shaved my head because I was determined not to watch my hair fall out. I looked in the mirror and didn't recognise myself,” she said.

“You change so much – you lose

your sense of self and that's what this is about for me, I'm going to be finding myself again. I'm hoping I can gather some courage and understanding as to why this has happened to me.

“It's extremely emotional to look in the mirror of death and turn away – it's a big challenge,” Ms Staib said.

Within a week of being diagnosed, Ms Staib had her left breast removed.

After 18 months of treatment

and five operations to reconstruct her breast, she is now in remission and back at work.

“There's a common misconception out there that only old people get cancer and that it's a death sentence. I'm living proof that it's not the case,” Ms Staib said.

■ To sponsor Ms Staib, who will be riding in the support crew, email dstaib@emergency.qld.gov.au or go to the website www.amazonheartthunder.org.

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